

GIDEON TAVERN

DRAWER 12

SPRINGFIELD

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Illinois Springfield

Globe Tavern

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the
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THE GLOBE HOTEL, SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS.

In a letter to Joshua R. Speed, dated May 18, 1843, Lincoln wrote: "We are not keeping house, but boarding at the Globe Tavern, which is very well kept now by a widow lady of the name of Beck. Our room (the same that Dr. Wallace occupied there) and boarding only costs us four dollars a week. . . . I most heartily wish you and your Fanny would not fail to come. Just let us know the time, and we will have a room provided for you at our house, and all be merry together for a while." The Globe Hotel stood in Springfield until about three years ago.

McClure
1896

Financing Easier Today

House-Buyer Abraham Lincoln Was Born About 100 Years Too Soon

\$1500 Price Hard To Get

The Abraham Lincolns had the same housing problems as many young families today. They were boarding in unsatisfactory quarters in Springfield, Ill., and were short of cash. How Lincoln managed to buy his first home is described by John Drury, former Chicago newspaperman, writing in "Inland," a magazine published by the Inland Steel Co. Excerpts from the article are printed below.

By JOHN DRURY

Like most of us, Abraham Lincoln wanted a house of his own soon after his marriage, and even more so after the bright, burning ambition of luxury-loving Mrs. Lincoln for the same thing; she began early to urge her tall, easy-going husband to get enough money together to buy or build a house.

When Lincoln got an opportunity to buy a home, he—again like most of us—did not have enough cash on hand to pay its full purchase price. He had to make special financial arrangements to acquire the house of his choice.

After his marriage to the socially prominent Mary Todd on Nov. 4, 1842, Lincoln—he was then 33 and she 23—was in such straightened circumstances that he and his bride were forced to live in a Springfield tavern known as the Globe. It was a combination boarding house and refreshment place.



At that early period in Lincoln's domestic life, he was making a meager living as a circuit-riding lawyer. One Lincoln authority, the late Harry E. Pratt, estimates that the lanky Springfield lawyer averaged, during the decade 1840-50, an income of between \$1500 and \$2000 a year from legal fees, averaging from \$10 to \$20 each.

If \$1500 a year is impossible to live on in these mid-twentieth century days, it was not too small an amount in the middle western frontier town of Springfield more than 100 years ago.

But it certainly was not enough to buy a mansion of the type in which Mary Lincoln was willing to compromise on a less pretentious house than her sister's. Lincoln wanted a home for her, but, as usual, he was lax and slow to action. And thus it was that Mary Lincoln, ambitious, energetic, socially conscious, began her campaign for a family home.

She wanted this home as much for herself as for the man she was married to; the man she was sure had a future.

Historians don't know how it came about, that after two years of life in the Globe Tavern, Lincoln bought the house of the Springfield minister who married him. That minister was the Rev. Charles Dresser, pastor of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, which Mrs. Lincoln attended.

It was then a new story-and-a-half frame dwelling with a few Greek Revival details, and had been erected only three years earlier. It stood—as it still does—at the northeast corner of Eighth and Jackson Streets, in the residential section of Springfield.

Although he was by nature a frugal man, as he was also a non-drinking, non-smoking, non-gambling and non-speculating man, still Lincoln was without a bank account—at least then. He did not have enough of a reserve fund to pay the \$1500 that the Rev. Mr. Dresser was asking.

Nonetheless, Lincoln wanted the Dresser house. Even more so did his wife.

Under the circumstances, the tall, smooth-shaven Springfield lawyer (he did not grow a beard until becoming President in 1861) entered into an agreement with the minister whereby Lincoln would pay \$1200 in cash for the house, and include in the transaction a Springfield lot that Lincoln owned, valued at \$300.

One month after the contract was drawn, Lincoln wrote a receipt on the back of it, acknowledging his \$750 advance payment on the property—one half of its full purchase price.

Although the contract stated that the minister was to transfer his home to Lincoln "on or before the first day of April next," it was not until May 2, 1844, that Lincoln paid the balance due, and thus became the owner of the Dresser property.

Immediately afterwards, Lincoln and his family moved from the Globe Tavern into their new home. Not recorded in the transfer of title was a \$900 mortgage on the house which the minister later cleared.

Regarding this, Lincoln is supposed to have said that he "reckoned he could trust

the preacher who married him" to pay off the mortgage.

Now at last the Lincolns had a home of their own. If Lincoln was pleased with this house, if he felt it was a triumph over his log cabin origin, he nonetheless had little to do with managing or improving it, mainly because he was so often absent on the judicial circuit or on political campaign trips.

So it was his energetic wife who ran the household, who entertained and who had most to do with the appearance of the house. It was she who, in 1856, had the house raised from a story-and-a-half to a full two stories, doing this while Lincoln was absent on the circuit.

Her proudest moment in the house was, of course, that momentous, dramatic Saturday night, May 19, 1860, when the official notification committee of the Republican Convention arrived from Chicago, and, in the north parlor of the house, formally told her tall, angular husband that he had been chosen as the party's nominee for President of the United States.

15. GLOBE TAVERN, SPRINGFIELD. After they were married, Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln went at once to the Globe Tavern on the north side of Adams street just west of the State House square. Widow Beck gave them board and room for four dollars a week. The joys and tribulations of married life for them, began at once. Mary developed a temper and Abraham patience. Here Robert was born, Aug. 1, 1842. They moved soon after to a one-story house at 214 S. Fourth St. not far from the present site of the Governor's Mansion. Here they lived until May 1844, when they purchased the often pictured homestead. Bvl.pp. 356, 363.

Good cut on printed page
is best to use, I think



Engraving by permission of H. W. Fay, Esq., De Kalb, Ill.
GLOBE TAVERN, SPRINGFIELD, WHERE LINCOLN LIVED AFTER HIS MARRIAGE
From an old print. The building is no longer standing.

111-37

S. in Fossil of clucan is said to
have taken a picture of globe Tavern

Slide Terrace

4-15



NHW vol. 1 p. 88





THE GLOBE TAVERN AT SPRINGFIELD, ILL.
WHERE MR. AND MRS. LINCOLN BOARDED AFTER THEIR MARRIAGE.

